

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-37 (cancelled)

38. (Currently amended) A protein variant which substitutes a valine residue for a phenylalanine residue in a protein having a biological response-modifying function by binding domain of a cytokine to a receptor.

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently amended) The protein variant according to claim ~~38~~ 39, wherein the cytokine is a 4-alpha helix bundle cytokine.

41. (Previously presented) The protein variant according to claim 40, wherein the 4-alpha helix bundle cytokine is selected from the group consisting of CNTF, EPO, F1t3L, G-CSF, GM-CSF, GH, IL-2, IL-3, IL-4, 1L-5, IL-6, IL-12p35, LPT, LIF, M-CSF, OSM, PL, SCF, TPO, IFN- α 2A, IFN- α 2B, IFN- β IFN- γ , IPN- ω and IFN- τ .

42. (Currently amended) The protein variant according to claim 41, wherein the CNTF, EPO, F1t3L, G-CSF, GM-CSF, GH, IL-2, IL-3, IL4, 1L-5, M-6, IL-12p35, LPT, L1F, M-CSF, OSM, PL, SCF and TPO are altered by substituting a valine for at least one phenylalanine residue ~~of within the amino acid residues in a binding domain having the sequence of amino acid residues~~ between positions 110 and 180 of SEQ ID NO.: 25.

43-61 (Cancelled)

62. (Currently amended) The protein variant according to claim 41, wherein the 4-alpha helix bundle cytokine is TPO that is altered by substituting a valine residue for a phenylalanine residue at a position 46, 128, 131, 141, 186, 204, 240 or 286 ~~of an amino acid sequence designated as~~ SEQ ID NO.: 25.

63-74 (Cancelled)

75. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the protein variant according to any one of Claims 38, 40, 41, 42 and 62 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.